

Congresswoman Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28) today said the state's \$11.6 billion request for additional stimulus funds to improve high-speed rail service from Niagara Falls to New York City will help spark new economic growth.

"This application is an important step forward in building a better economic future for New York," said Slaughter. "High-speed rail has the potential to expand our regional workforce, improve commerce, generate new tourism opportunities and spark revitalization in our region for years to come. Eventually I hope to connect the Empire Corridor to Toronto, Montreal and back down to Albany creating a large economic development center."

The creation of a third track for passenger rail will allow freight and passenger rail to operate more independently of one another, making high-speed rail travel more efficient for both passengers and freight. The Empire Corridor is one of the most heavily traveled freight route in the United States making infrastructure and transportation improvements vitally important to Western New York's economy, specifically its manufacturing industry.

"I firmly believe one of our problems with our economy then and our economy now is lack of adequate transportation. Bringing high-speed rail to Upstate New York is one of my highest priorities," said Slaughter.

The Federal Rail Administration estimates that for every \$1 billion investment in rail transportation, 47,500 jobs are created, and the United States Department of Transportation reports that investment in public transportation creates 20 percent more jobs than an identical investment in building a road or highway.

In August, New York State applied for \$564.8 million in stimulus funds for shovel-ready projects to improve existing track and build a third track dedicated to a high-speed passenger rail line across Upstate New York. The request this week is the second part of that process.